MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: Under Section 34 of the District Municipalities Act it is provided that Our Government can recover...

PRESIDENT. There is no doubt that there are provisions in some of our Acts that the Government can recover loans advanced. But there is no actual provision enabling the local bodies to take loans from Government and it is because that lacuna was found in the present enactments, that this Bill is thought necessary.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: There is a specific provision in the Trivandrum Corporation Act.

PRESIDENT: The Corporation Act is different from the District Municipalities Act.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: I think that it is also included in the purview of this Bill.

PRESIDENT: No. I take it that the proposal is that it should be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: No, Sir.

PRESIDENT: Order, order. It depends on the decision of the House.

MR. P. S. NATARAJA PILLAI: It is a very important measure and should be referred to a Select Committee.

SECRETARY: The title of the bill shall be "The Travancore Local Authorities Loans Bill."

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: I move that the Travancore Local Authorities Loans Bill be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the following members.

1. Rajyasevaniratha S. Chattanatha Karayalar, *(Deputy Presiaent).*
2. Messrs. A. K. Bhaskar
3. ,, Gangadharan Nair
4. ,, Puliyoor T. P. Velayudhan Pillai
5. ,, M. L. Janardanan Pillai
6. ,, V. S. Krishna Pillai
7. ,, S. Muthukaruppa Pillai
8. ,, P. S. Nataraja Pillai
9. ,, C. P. Gopala Panicker
10. ,, P. S. Mahomed

The motion was put and carried.

THE TRAVANCORE CHILDREN BILL.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: I beg to introduce the Travancore Children Bill. I move that the Bill be read in the Assembly.

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: I second it.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: The Bill is intended to make provision for the protection of vagrant children and for the establishment of Juvenile Courts to deal with youthful offenders. It deals with children below the age of 16. It is proposed to repeal the Reformatory Act. This Bill is divided into two parts, part one for vagrant children

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and children who are not taken care of by their parents, part two relates to youthful offenders. Instead of sending them to places of detention, certain homes are proposed to be established. These children will be detained in these establishments and properly trained. Provision is also made for the trial of these youthful offenders in separate courts known as Juvenile Courts. There are detailed provisions in regard to vagrant and youthful offenders. There is another Bill which I am just going to introduce known as the Travancore Borstal Schools Bill, which deals with youthful offenders above 16 and below 21.

These Bills are intended not only to give protection to children but also to wean them from their evil propensities and to bring them up as dutiful citizens of the State.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: Mr. President, Sir, I appreciate the step taken by Government in introducing this Bill. As I said in regard to the Prevention of Begging Bill this also seems to me to be an overdue Bill. Those of us who have taken some pains to study the conditions of waifs and strays in urban and rural areas, know how much destitution and delinquency there is among them. I have had some contact with social welfare work among such children in Trivandrum, Manganam and elsewhere. In Alleppey a group of young men took a census of these young fellows and that survey disclosed a serious condition of misery and squalor and poverty prevalent among them. In Trivandrum there is a stream of such boys, destitute, ill clad and in dirty environment most of whom have gravitated to the town from moffusil areas owing to poverty, neglect of the parents or desertion by parents. It is pointed out that the largest number of cases appearing before the Bombay Juvenile Court are cases of defendancy and neglect, rather than delinquency. Statistics if taken in our towns will reveal the same state of affairs.

In India, Bombay took the lead in 1924 in passing its Bombay Children Act, and I am glad to note that the present Bill is framed on the model of that Act. Experience of such Acts in America and Britain should be made use of in our country. There are certain sections in this Bill which have to be remodelled or altered. I hope that will be done by the Select Committee which will be set up for the purpose.

The bill provides measures for the custody and protection of children, for dealing with offences against children and their prevention, and for dealing with youthful offenders.

Now some of the important aspects of this Bill are the establishment of Juvenile Courts and Correction on institution and certified Schools etc. I just want to give a note of warning to those who will be entrusted with the duty of enforcing this Act, that they should remember certain fundamental principles in dealing with young offenders. I mean psychological aspects. Bill provides that for the detention of children preliminary to their court hearings, they are to

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[Mr. K. A. Mathew.]

be taken to a 'place of safety' by the police. Sir, therein lies danger. I am reminded of what Honourable Mr. M. R. Jayakar said in the Bombay Legislative Chamber. He said that one desire of most people in India is to avoid getting within five hundred yards of a police station. Imagine these boys being taken to a police station, which as we all know, is not the safest place for them. I strongly object to these boys being taken to the police station. They must be looked after in a manner different from the nature of police work and training the police are accustomed to. I suggest that before they are taken to the Courts they should be kept in Remand Homes, and kept in the company of persons who can befriend them and offer them good advice and help them to be rid of their evil propensities. The U. S. A. Children's Bureau, while formulating standards in 1921 regarding detention of juveniles emphasised that children should not be detained in police stations.

Regarding the formation of Juvenile Courts, I may say that the experiments done in America in this direction clearly show that the judges chosen should be men with thorough understanding of child psychology and Juvenile Court Philosophy. If these courts which are to be set up are to be manned by superannuated old fogeys, I say with due respect to grey hairs, that it would not be satisfactory. Old men lacking in imagination will not understand the working of the minds of young children. So I suggest that when these courts are set up, special care should be taken to see that the magistrates appointed are those who have special qualifications for this task. The Juvenile Court should be conceived as a court of parentel power to protect the erring and unfortunate child.

There is another provision for the appointment of probation officers. I understand, Sir, Doraji Tata Graduate School of social work Bombay trains young men for this kind of work; and if the Travancore Government makes use of such material, they will get suitable men as probation officers.

PRESIDENT: We have already sent some people to be trained there.

MR. K. A. MATHEW: I understand that Travancoreans are studying there and I hope Government will make use of them. A success in this venture depends in a large measure on the right type of officers and I hope Government will spare no pains to secure them. Unless the Probation staff carries out its work of supervision in an intelligent and conscientious manner the work of the Juvenile Court will not succeed. I strongly wish that Government would take advantage of non-official bodies in Travancore to put into effect the provisions of this Bill.

The Bombay Children Act was passed in 1924; but for three years it remained inoperative for lack of special machinery required to give effect to it. Then the Government called together conferences

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in the Secretariat at Bombay where existing social organisations were represented. As a result of those conferences the Children's Aid Society was born and that Society has been of great help in putting into effect the provisions of the Act. With Government aid the Society started a remand home in Bombay. In the period 1927—1937 about 8,000 children were in this remand home. During the Congress Ministry, Mr. K. M. Munshi, who was then Home Minister took steps for starting a "Children's Colony". It provides accommodation for nearly 750 children. Other similar homes are working in Bombay. I am sure the Government will do well to encourage local social organisations to start similar homes. At Manganam, near Kottayam, such a home known as "Balagram" is working well. I trust that Children's Aid Societies will come into being before long. As I said during the discussion on the Prevention of Begging Bill, the success of all such social legislation depends largely on the securing of the co-operation of the public. I hope Goverment will take advantage of non official social organisations in Travancore to implement the provisions of this Bill. I have very great pleasure in supporting the first reading of this Bill.

SECRETARY: The title of the Bill shall be "The Travancore Children Bill."

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: I move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the following members.

1. Rajyasevaniratha S. Chattanatha Karayalar, *(Deputy President)*.
2. Messrs. M. K. Chandrasekhara Bhattathiri
3. ,, T. K. Narayana Pillai
4. ,, C. S. Lakshmana Aiyar
5. ,, J. T. Moraes
6. ,, P. S. Nataraja Pillai
7. ,, M. R. Ramakrishna Pillai
8. ,, K. R. Narayanan
9. ,, B. K. Pillai
10. ,, K. A. Mathew

The motion was put and carried.

THE TRAVANCORE BORSTAL SCHOOLS BILL.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: I rise to introduce the Travancore Borstal Schools Bill. I move that the Bill be read in the Assembly.

RAJYASEVAPRAVINA G. PARAMESWARAN PILLAI: I second it.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: This is a complementary Bill to the other Bill and I move that this may be referred to the same Select Committee.

The motion was put and carried.

THE TRAVANCORE PUBLIC HEALTH BILL.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI: I rise to introduce the Travancore Public Health Bill. I move that the Bill be read in the Assembly.

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